



Ministry  
of  
Education

Ontario

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Minister

Government  
Publications

# French as a Second Language

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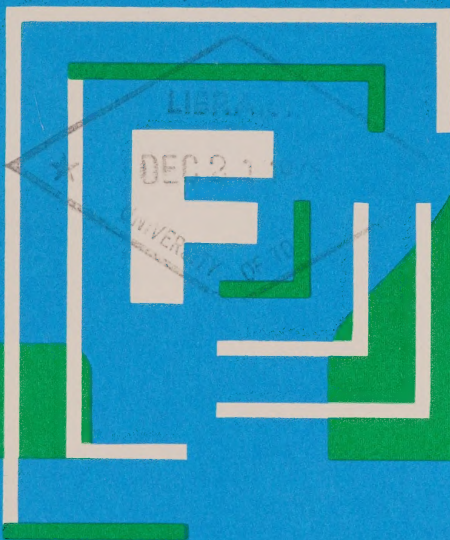
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As a student attending an Ontario school, what does the study of the French language mean to you? How will a knowledge of the French language help you in your chosen career? Does your being bilingual open up additional job opportunities? We hope to answer these and other questions you may have concerning the study of the French language.

Do you know that more than 10 per cent of Ontario's population speaks French and that French is the mother tongue of one quarter of all Canadians? French is spoken by some 80 million people throughout the world. It is considered one of the international languages of the world and is one of the five official languages of the United Nations.

Ability in a second language, no matter what language, provides almost unlimited opportunities for new and interesting pursuits and personal enjoyment. The student of French has access to a whole new world: there are new books and magazines to read, new songs and radio programs to listen to, new films and TV programs to watch. Each undertaking in the second language provides new and exciting challenges. Through reading and other activities the student of a second language develops an understanding of another culture and people.

The Ministry of Education strongly supports the introduction of French as a second language at all levels of elementary and secondary school. There are more than 650,000 English-speaking elementary school children enrolled in French-language classes across the province. Ontario's commitment to second-language instruction was strengthened this year with the introduction of a new French-as-a-second-language program.

It is not the aim of Ontario schools to make every pupil fully bilingual. However, the Ministry of Education does encourage school boards to provide French-as-a-second-language programs for their students.

In support of these programs, the Ministry of Education is offering higher per-pupil grants for French-as-a-second-language instruction. The new grants relate directly to the amount of accumulated instruction in French: the more minutes per day or hours per year of French instruction the student accumulates, the higher the grant to the school board concerned.

The Ministry has also expanded its program of teacher training in French as a second language, and is developing new learning materials and curriculum guidelines for the program. The Ministry is also paying

a special grant to school boards that convert elementary classrooms into French-language learning centres.

What is the program all about and what can you as a student or parent expect from it?

The new program has three components. The first is the core program which provides for 20 to 40 minutes of instruction in French as a subject per day. The second is the extended program which provides for 20 to 40 minutes per day of instruction in French *plus* the teaching of one or two other subjects in the French language. And finally there is provision for immersion programs, in which one half or more of the elementary student's program is taught in French.

Students who accumulate 1,200 hours of French instruction throughout their years in school can expect to gain a fundamental knowledge of the French language, its grammar, and pronunciation. Such students should have a vocabulary of between 3,000 and 5,000 words, which should allow them to carry on simple conversations in French and to read French-language publications with the aid of a dictionary.

Students who accumulate 2,100 hours of French instruction during their school career should be able to read French-language publications and understand French-language television programs without too much difficulty, and be able to carry on a French conversation with considerable fluency.

Students who reach the top level of attainment (5,000 hours of French-language instruction during their school years) should qualify for jobs in which French is the working language.

The ability to speak or write French has definite advantages for the student entering the job market. Job opportunities for bilingual students exist in many fields - the federal and provincial public service, the travel and transportation industry, the Canadian Forces, telecommunications, radio and television, and a host of others.

For further information regarding job opportunities for bilingual students, consult your school guidance counsellor.



